

The following claims are presented for examination:

**1. (Currently Amended)** An apparatus comprising:

pseudo skin;

a receiver, wherein said receiver receives an end effector through an insertion region in said pseudo skin; and

a first device for performing a first skin-interaction technique that is used in conjunction with a simulated vascular-access procedure, wherein the first skin-interaction technique is selected from the group consisting of palpation and occlusion and is performed on the pseudo skin at a first skin-interaction region of the pseudo skin, and further wherein;

(a) said receiver and said first device are disposed beneath said pseudo skin and are covered by said pseudo skin; and

(b) said insertion region of said pseudo skin is closer to a user than said first skin-interaction region of said pseudo skin when said user is using said apparatus.

**2. – 3. (Canceled)**

**4. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 1 [[2]] further comprising a second device for performing a second skin-interaction technique on the pseudo skin at a second skin-interaction region of the pseudo skin, wherein said second device is disposed beneath said pseudo skin and is covered by said pseudo skin.

**5. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 4 wherein:

said second skin-interaction technique comprises skin stretching;

~~a third region of said pseudo skin is accessible to perform said second skin-interaction technique; and~~

said third second skin-interaction region of said pseudo skin is closer to a user than said first insertion region of said pseudo skin when said user is using said apparatus.

**6. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a housing, wherein:

- (a)** said receiver and said first device are contained within said housing;
- (b)** said pseudo skin is substantially co-extensive with a surface of said housing;
- (c)** said housing has an anterior portion [[,]] and a posterior portion; [[,]] an upper surface and a lower surface wherein;
- (d)** in use [:)] said anterior portion is proximal to a user; and
- (e)** said posterior portion is distal to said user [:)]  
said lower surface is proximal to a support surface on which said apparatus resides; and  
said upper surface is distal to said support surface.

**7. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said an uppermost surface of said housing is no more than about 5 inches above said a lowermost surface thereof.

## **8. – 12. (Canceled)**

**13. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim [[10]] **6** further comprising a second device for performing a second skin-interaction technique on the pseudo skin at a second skin-interaction region of the pseudo skin, wherein said second device is disposed beneath said pseudo skin and is covered by said pseudo skin.

**14. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 13 wherein [:)]  
said first skin-interaction technique comprises one of either palpation or occlusion; and said second skin-interaction technique comprises skin-stretch.

**15. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 14 wherein at least some portion of said second device is closer to said anterior portion of said housing than said first device.

**16. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 14 wherein at least some portion of said second device is closer to said anterior portion of said housing than said first end of said receiver.

**17. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said first end of said receiver is closer to said anterior portion of said housing than said first device.

**18. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 14 wherein an upper-most surface of said first device extends a greater distance above said ~~a~~ lower~~most~~ surface of said housing than said first end of said receiver.

**19. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 14 wherein an upper-most surface of said first device extends further above said ~~a~~ lower~~most~~ surface of said housing than an upper-most surface of said second device.

**20. (Canceled)**

**21. (Previously Presented)** The apparatus of claim 6 further comprising an electronics/communications interface, wherein:

said electronics/communications interface receives signals from sensors that are associated with at least one of said first device or said receiver; and

said electronics/communications interface is disposed beneath said pseudo skin and is covered by said pseudo skin.

**22. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 21 wherein said electronics/communications interface is closer to said posterior portion of said housing than said first device.

**23. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 21 wherein said electronics/communications interface is closer to said posterior portion of said housing than said receiver.

**24. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 21 wherein said electronics/communications interface comprises a printed circuit board, and further wherein a major surface of said printed circuit board is disposed orthogonal to an uppermost surface of said first device.

**25. (Currently Amended)** An apparatus comprising:

an housing, wherein said housing has an opening in an uppermost surface thereof;

pseudo skin, wherein said pseudo skin covers said opening;

an end effector, wherein said end effector is inserted into said housing through said pseudo skin during the performance of a simulated vascular-access procedure; and

a plurality of mechanisms, wherein said plurality of mechanisms are contained completely within said housing and are covered by said pseudo skin, and wherein said plurality of mechanisms include:

- (a) a first mechanism is for simulating a ~~first-skin-interaction~~ skin-stretch technique that is used in conjunction with a simulated vascular-access procedure and is performed on said pseudo skin; and
- (b) a second mechanism for receiving said end effector.

**26. – 27. (Canceled)**

**28. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 25 wherein said mechanisms includes a third mechanism for simulating at least one of a palpation or an occlusion ~~a second-skin-interaction~~ technique that is used in conjunction with a simulated vascular-access procedure and is performed on said pseudo skin, and wherein said end effector is at least one of either a needle or a catheter.

**29. – 32. (Canceled)**

**33. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 28 ~~[[31]]~~ wherein said housing has an anterior end and a posterior end, wherein in use, said anterior end is proximal to a user, and wherein a portion of said second mechanism is flanked by said first mechanism proximal to said anterior end and said third mechanism proximal to said posterior end along said longitudinal axis.

**34. (Currently Amended)** The apparatus of claim 28 wherein:

a user interacts with said first mechanism at a first site ~~at an upper surface of~~ on said pseudo skin housing;

said user interacts with said second mechanism at a second site ~~at said upper surface of~~ on said pseudo skin housing;

said user interacts with said third mechanism at a third site ~~at said upper surface of~~ on said pseudo skin housing; and

a position locations of each of said first site, second site, and third site on said pseudo skin along said longitudinal axis correspond ~~[[s]]~~ to said positions locations of said respective first mechanism, second mechanism, and third mechanism, respectively, along said longitudinal axis within said housing.

**35. (Currently Amended)** An apparatus comprising:

a pseudo skin;

a plurality of mechanisms with which a user interacts for simulating a vascular-access procedure, including at least one mechanism for performing a skin-interaction technique that is performed on said pseudo skin, wherein said plurality of mechanisms are disposed under said pseudo skin and are covered by said pseudo skin; and

a housing, wherein said housing contains said plurality of mechanisms.

**36. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 35 wherein said housing is no more than about 5 inches in height.

**37. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 35 wherein said housing is no more than about 4 inches in height.

**38. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 35 wherein at least one of either a needle or catheter is disposed outside of said housing until inserted therein during a simulated vascular-access procedure.

**39. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 35 further comprising a data processing system, wherein said data processing system receives signals from sensors that are associated with said plurality of mechanisms.

**40. (Original)** The apparatus of claim 35 wherein said plurality of mechanisms comprise discrete devices, wherein a first of said devices is for enabling a user to perform a skin-stretch technique, a second of said devices is for receiving a needle or catheter or both, and a third of said devices is for enabling a user to perform at least one of either a palpation technique or an occlusion technique.